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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

The East Orange Education Plaza was a proposal developed to provide better educational opportunity for children from kindergarten through high school. The physical structure of the Plaza would encourage development of a program which would apply to all kinds of students. Specialized teachers and special resources would be brought together in one area. Facilities would be available to train teachers to better serve the needs of the community.

The buildings that would be involved are the middle school, a resource building, the high school, the primary school, the gymnasium and arts center, a stadium area, and a parking area.

Enrichment and flexibility in the plan would provide more extracurricular activities, more equipment and library books, specialized programs, guidance, food service for all, and better motivation. Advantages for teaching would include closer cooperation with colleges, attraction of better teachers, more staff help, more available materials, and continuing inservice training.

The only phase discussed was Phase I, the Middle School. The advantages of the Middle School would be to eliminate the need for building expensive additions to five schools, to allow the closing of 25 substandard classrooms, and to close two elementary schools. Grades 7 and 8 would occupy the building; later grades 6 and 5 would be added.

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ERIC Form 1

NEW JERSEY--EAST ORANGE

the east orange education plaza

ED001951

To the People of East Orange from the Board of Education:

ALL OF US are aware of the importance of education and and its place in society, but the trend in many American cities has been to spend money to correct situations rather than to prevent them from occurring. Problems created by a mobile and exploding population such as college entrance, vocational preparedness, juvenile delinquency, and housing-pattern inequities sooner or later find their way to the Board of Education. During recent years some classes in our city have been on double sessions, others have been housed in substandard rooms, and the class size in many schools has increased significantly. At present all classrooms in the city are in use. Enrollments in most schools have increased steadily each year. **We now find ourselves at the crossroads.** No further expansion of educational programs is possible without following patterns which we know will lead to a reduction in educational effectiveness. A need exists for additional classrooms in many schools. We must decide whether or not this needed classroom space will be provided in an unplanned manner by building costly additions to the schools on the city's perimeter, or whether a modern facility, with thought for the educational needs and demands of the future, should be carefully planned for a central location. In such a setting all children would be brought together for a rich, rewarding, and complete educational experience. Recently there has been much discussion of the educational park by educators and planners who generally agree that solutions to our concerns can be found in this concept. We believe that East Orange is a city in which the park or plaza concept would be successful. After long and careful study we submit for your consideration a bold plan which we firmly believe will better prepare our youth for tomorrow's world and which will strengthen our city and place it in a position of educational leadership. We trust you will consider our plans carefully.

WILLIAM L. HOFFMANN, *President* / SCOTT HARRIS, *Vice President* / MAURICE N. TRAINER / MRS. MILDRED E. BARRY / PATRICK J. MCLOUGHLIN

Office of Education-LEO
Research and Materials Branch

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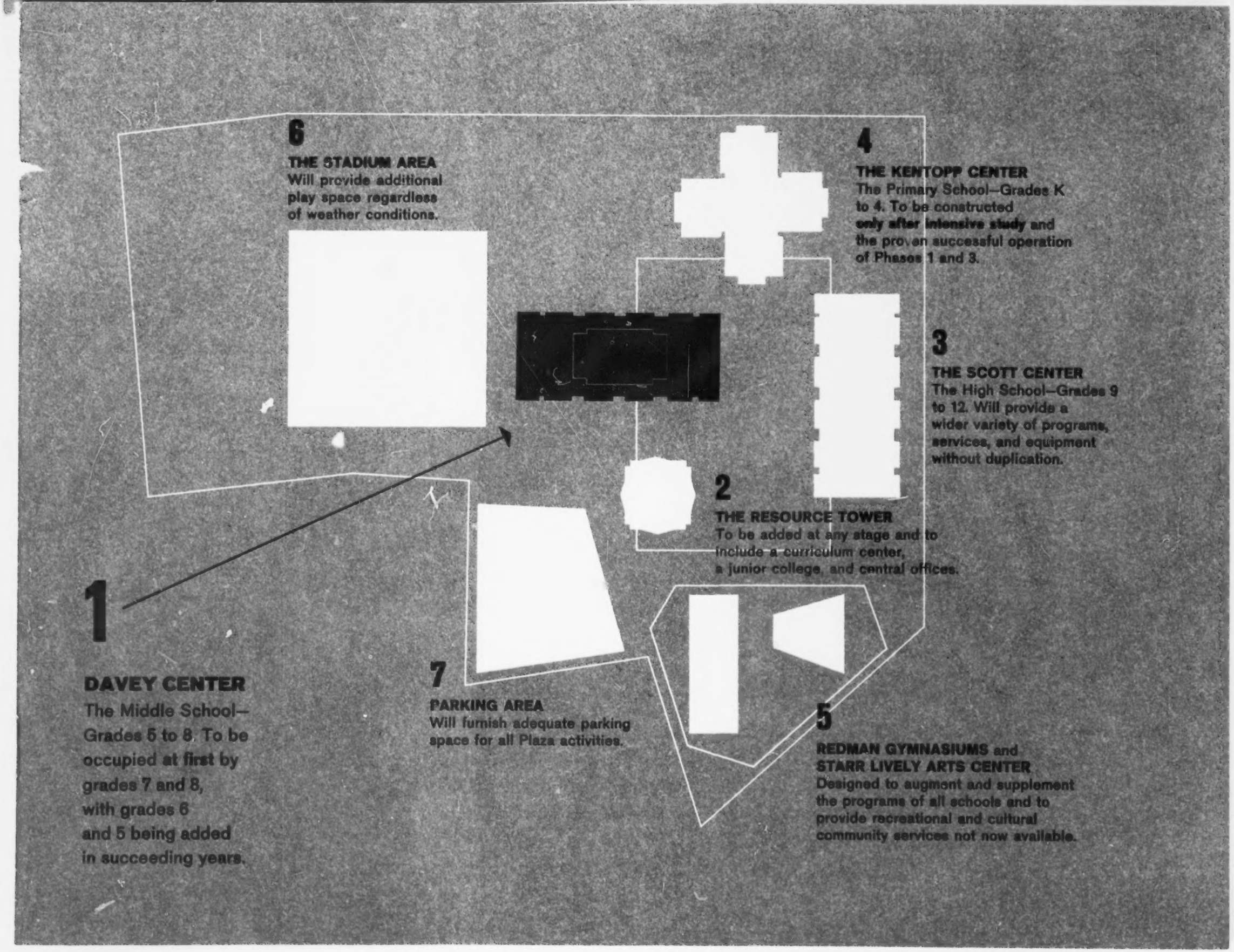
6
THE STADIUM AREA
Will provide additional play space regardless of weather conditions.
4
THE KENTOPP CENTER
The Primary School—Grades K to 4. To be constructed only after intensive study and the proven successful operation of Phases 1 and 3.
3
THE SCOTT CENTER
The High School—Grades 9 to 12. Will provide a wider variety of programs, services, and equipment without duplication.
2
THE RESOURCE TOWER
To be added at any stage and to include a curriculum center, a junior college, and central offices.
1
DAVEY CENTER
The Middle School—Grades 5 to 8. To be occupied at first by grades 7 and 8, with grades 6 and 5 being added in succeeding years.
7
PARKING AREA
Will furnish adequate parking space for all Plaza activities.
5
REDMAN GYMNASIUMS and STARR LIVELY ARTS CENTER
Designed to augment and supplement the programs of all schools and to provide recreational and cultural community services not now available.

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the unique accomplishment of an education plaza *enrichment and flexibility for the student...*

"We know what to do. The time has come when we must act."

BERNARD E. DONOVAN, *Executive Deputy Superintendent of Schools, New York City.*

"The educational park or plaza concept is one of the striking new ideas for the improvement of city education. It provides for efficient use of a modern educational plant. At the same time it brings together the children of the various groups that make up the American society and gives them a good chance to learn the ways of a pluralistic democracy."

ROBERT J. HAVIGHURST, *Professor of Education, University of Chicago.*

"The East Orange Education Plaza is one of the most exciting proposals that I have ever helped investigate. The country needs a center where proven educational techniques and devices can be brought together . . . this project could well be a pilot program for America's cities."

JOHN J. O'NEILL, *Dean, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University.*

"It doesn't matter how large a school is—it is how it's organized."

ROBERT L. WILLIAMS, *A.I.P., Executive Director, American Institute of Planners.*

"It takes courage to embark upon a program of this sort, and I am excited at the possibilities and thought given to this project by the East Orange Board of Education. There will be problems, but there are problems connected with all building. I see no reason why this concept should not become a reality. It depends on how much the people associated with it believe in it."

JOHN ROWLETT, *A.I.A., Caudill, Rowlett, and Scott.*

More extra-curricular activities

Food service for all

Better grouping methods

More interesting equipment and teaching aids

More library books

Possibility of large group instruction

Provisions for individual study

More specialized programs

More equal class size

Less chance of failure

Guidance available at all age levels

No transfer problem

Possible nursery schools

Practical vocational training classes

Special opportunities for gifted children

Better use of special teachers

Better motivation

...resources, training, stimulation, and higher morale for the teacher

Best teachers will be attracted to system

Career teachers will stay with system

Close cooperation with colleges and universities

Experienced teachers readily available for consultation

Behavioral problems more evenly distributed

Opportunity for more creative teaching

Large professional library available

Help for staff available

Opportunity to study new teaching methods

Help for urban teachers

Flexibility

Teach only in one specialized field

Closer cooperation among all services

Opportunity to work with new teaching methods

School supplies immediately available

Continuous in-service training

Records more readily available

"As our nation doubles in population, schools will necessarily be larger than in the old days we have known. Indeed, the consolidation of schools is going on all over the country, providing greater efficiency, more and better services by virtue of their centralization. It is a movement that should be encouraged."

HAROLD B. GORES, *President, Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc.*

"Schools must graduate individuals who are flexible or else our society will be too rigid to deal with the future. The way we do this is through a flexible program in a flexible operation. This school will educate youngsters for jobs which do not exist and for professions which cannot be described. This concept should do it."

B. FRANK BROWN, *Principal, Melbourne High School, Melbourne, Florida.*

"It is going to take a bold approach if some of our school systems are to be saved. We do not have a lot of time to make up our minds how we are going to save them because time is running out. Mobility within the city is a problem. The idea that we must continue to patch up the existing system actually does not work out because you don't know where your children are going to be from one year to the next. You can renovate a school and find out that your children are on the other side of town. A central school would relieve this very difficult problem."

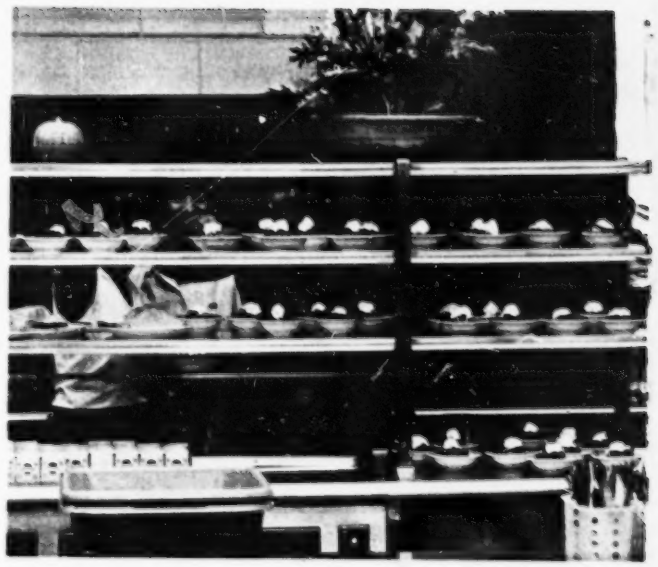
WILLIAM S. TWICHELL, *Essex County Superintendent of Schools.*

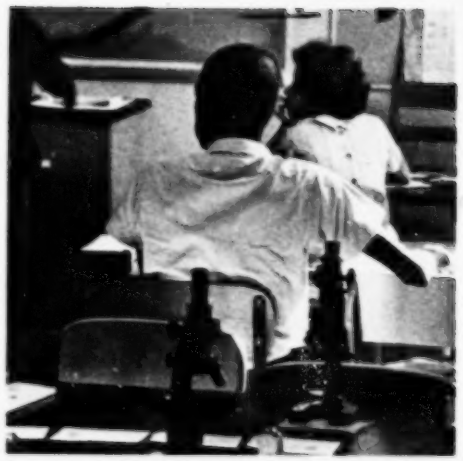
"The United States Office of Education appreciates the opportunity to be a part of this exciting plan, and we will do what we can to help you make it a reality."

JOHN L. CAMERON, *Chief, School Housing Section, U. S. Office of Education.*

education prepares to challenge the future *the modern community provides the tools*

Since the East Orange Board of Education is presenting the Plaza as a concept rather than as a definite plan, no concrete cost projections are being made at this time. To accomplish Phase One should cost no more than immediate needs for additions and renovations. The sale of valuable property and its return to the tax rolls must be considered an asset. Over the next 15 years, the city will be spending considerable sums to keep our schools in normal operation, without changes. This new plan will, therefore, not be as costly to the taxpayer as sinking good money after bad buildings. The strengthening of the educational program, the savings brought about by consolidation of operations, and the lengthening of the school year are most important considerations, also. Several foundations and the U. S. Office of Education have expressed interest in the East Orange Education Plaza. We have applied for substantial grants which will permit research and study over a long period of time and in considerable depth. Some specific educational areas which need research before acceptance will also be studied by grants that are now available. Once the community decides to proceed with Phase One, a grant for the architect's and engineering fees for the total project may be expected. The excitement of this new idea has generated interest in many areas, and there is no doubt that much help—of a material and an advisory nature—will be forthcoming.





To the People of East Orange from the Superintendent of Schools:

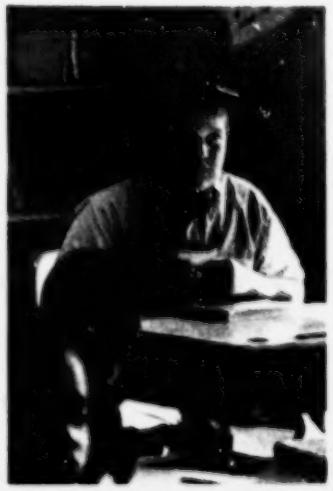
THE CONCEPTS AND PROPOSALS outlined on the preceding pages of this brochure represent carefully thought out plans for our city's educational future. I believe they are in keeping with the general goals of our city and that their acceptance will prevent East Orange from being added to the ever-increasing list of large city school systems which do nothing to strengthen their position until it is too late, and then become the casualty of change. It must be understood that this is a proposal. It is not a concrete plan that has already been adopted. It is to be discussed, studied, planned, and then, hopefully, approved—phase by phase. This proposal was designed to continue a high standard of educational opportunity for our school-age youth to make them better equipped for the world of tomorrow. Several educational foundations and government agencies have expressed an interest in the Plaza concept and are certain to aid us in studying it further. **It is up to you!** The decision is yours. We must act quickly on Phase One. We need classrooms. The fate of children and the future of educatic. in East Orange are now in your hands.

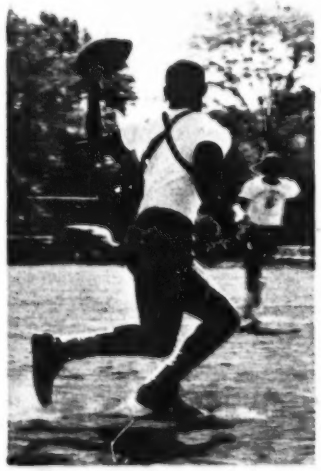
ROBERT H. SEITZER

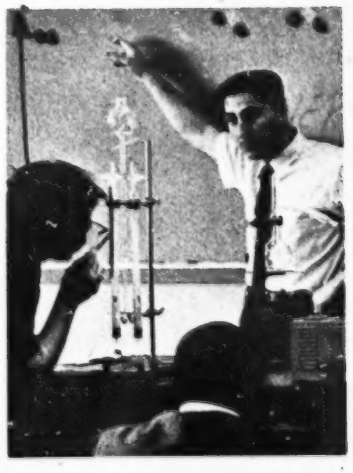
MANY MEETINGS *will be scheduled for the period from November 16, 1964, to January 15, 1965, at which presentations will be made to explain the total Plaza generally and Phase One specifically. Local papers will carry full details of the meetings well in advance. You are invited to attend.*

"The education plaza is a particularly attractive concept in today's planning for effective urban schools. It permits a concentration of academic talent at one location, bringing together teachers of different subjects at various levels for an exchange of ideas and experiences. The education plaza breaks down patterns which have isolated school administrators from each other. Above all, children benefit by being exposed to a more stimulating and orderly school environment. The education plaza may have an increasingly important role in urban education in coming years. East Orange is to be congratulated for taking a forward step that will be watched attentively by all who want better schools."

FRANCIS KEPPEL, *U.S. Commissioner of Education*







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the east orange education plaza

a modern community copes with the learning explosion

1 Davey Center—The Middle School Grades 5 to 8

2 The Resource Tower

3 The Scott Center—The High School Grades 9 to 12

4 The Kentopp Center—The Primary School, Grades K to 4

5 Redman Gymnasiums and Starr Lively Arts Center

6 The Stadium Area

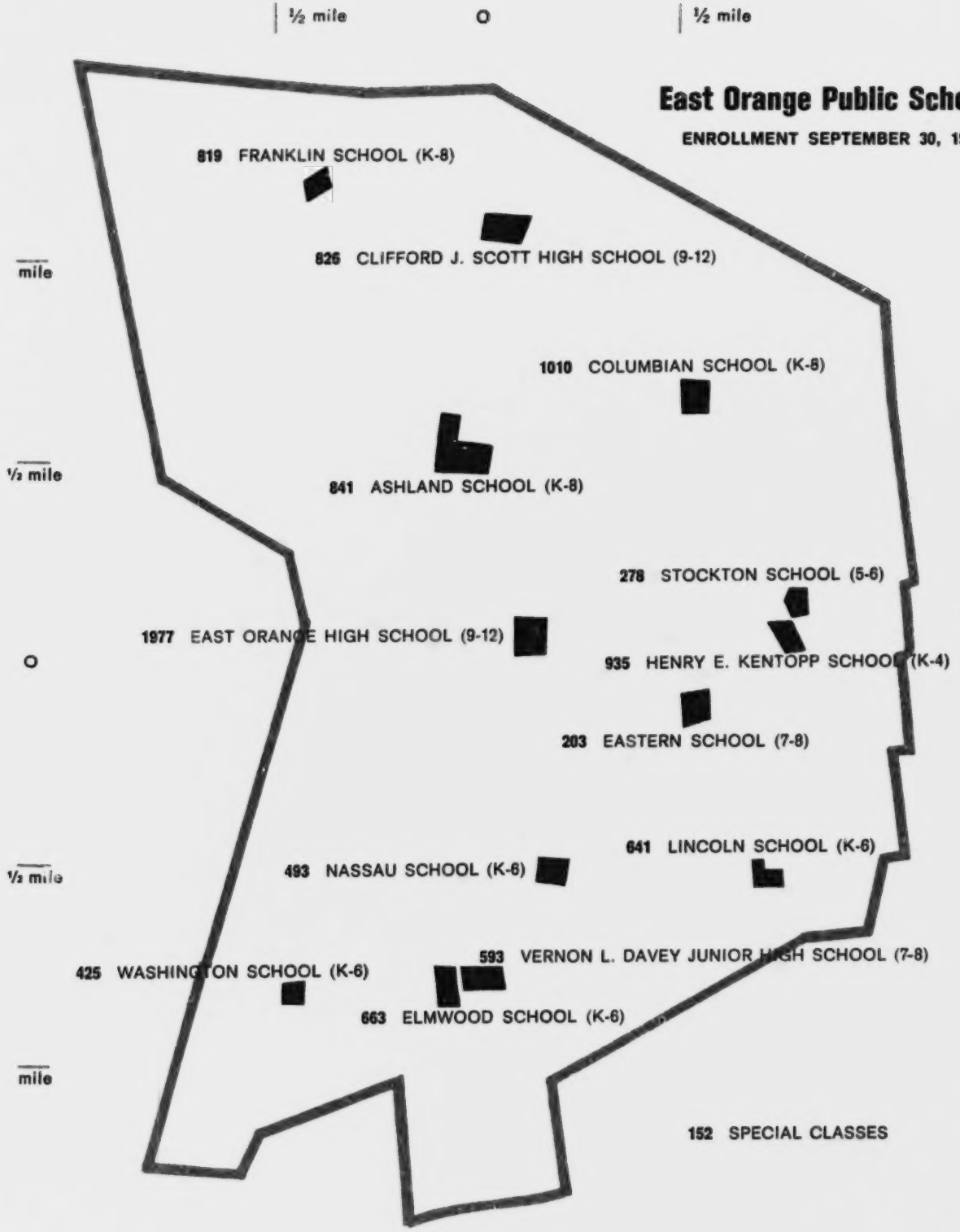
7 Parking Area

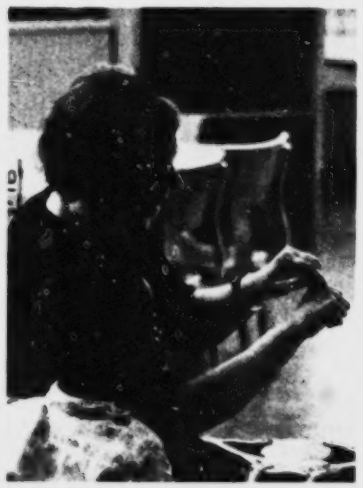
Office of Education-EEOP
Research and Materials Branch

The East Orange Education Plaza envisioned by the Board of Education is designed to provide educational opportunity of the highest calibre for all children from kindergarten through junior college. To be constructed in at least seven stages, the Plaza will furnish a year-round education for our young people in an ungraded setting on a central site. It will also become a cultural, recreational, and enrichment center for the entire community. Each phase will be preceded by a period of intensive study and evaluation by the Board of Education, members of the staff, and interested citizens of the community. The Plaza concept provides for the efficient use of modern and effective educational materials and techniques and allows the most education possible for the least amount of money. In a period of up to 15 years all school children in the city will be brought to a central location where large buildings housing 3000 or more pupils will be organized as many small schools. The physical structure of the Plaza will permit and encourage the development of a program which fits all kinds of pupils. Specialized teachers and special resources which cannot be provided haphazardly in isolated school buildings will be possible in the Plaza. To maintain its excellent reputation for quality education, East Orange needs to adopt a plan which will continue to provide its youth with these advantages. In addition, facilities will be available to help train teachers to better serve the needs of our community. The East Orange Education Plaza is designed to accomplish all of these aims.

East Orange Public Schools

ENROLLMENT SEPTEMBER 30, 1964





quality education
why an education plaza in east orange? and a model for others

Enrollment Statistics 1964-65

GRADES	STUDENTS
K-4	4157
5-8	2881
9-12	2818
Total	**9856**

East Orange is a compact city of 3.9 square miles on the outer rim of the metropolitan New York area and has a population of more than 80,000 people. It could be similar to its larger neighbors, but it is not. East Orange has always planned for the future—as indicated by the developing skyline of new apartments and office buildings. It has always studied its problems, made plans for their solution, and then implemented them. In its change from a suburban to an urban community, the city has been aggressive and courageous in carrying out its plans. Even though major highway building programs during the last decade have quartered the city and Federal renewal programs have brought about large-scale changes, these have served only to revitalize the city and cause it to meet its future with vision. The short-term needs of the city's schools call for extensive additions, renovations, and modernization programs just to provide minimum housing for our school children, but East Orange must have a long-range plan that will provide a more definite solution to its school needs. School planning other than in a central location seems impractical, costly, ineffective, and rigid. While such planning is taking place, an expansion of recreational, cultural, and enrichment opportunity for all of the citizens must be considered, with special emphasis on programs for the senior citizens of the community.

education plaza
phase 1 *a middle school provides the nucleus of change*

On September 30, 1964, there were 2881 pupils enrolled in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 in East Orange. These children occupied 107 classrooms in 10 buildings. Phase One—to be known as the Middle School—would eventually house these pupils. It is the thinking of the Board of Education and school officials that these four grades would be moved to the Middle School in stages, beginning with the seventh and eighth grades, with the sixth grades coming together the following year, and the fifth grades the year after that. Careful planning prior to each of the moves would make the transition easy and smooth. Bringing together grades 7 and 8 would make classrooms immediately available, **eliminate the need for building expensive additions to five schools,** and allow the **closing of 25 substandard classrooms** in seven schools. After transferring grades 6 and 5 to the Middle School, at least **two elementary schools could be closed and returned to the city tax rolls.** In addition to the above advantages, programs planned for some of the advanced stages could be initiated in the vacated classrooms, and each school would have flexibility which crowded conditions will not allow. This one phase would provide the city's schools with what is known as a 4-4-4 organization, a generally acceptable organization for the present and the future.